General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 February 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 119 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.2)*]

56/161. Human rights in the administration of justice

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the principles embodied in articles 3, 5, 8, 9 and 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and the relevant provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols thereto,[2] in particular article 6 of the Covenant, which states, inter alia, that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life and prohibits the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age, and article 10, which provides that all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person,

Bearing in mind also the relevant provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,[3] the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[4] in particular the right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice, the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[5] in particular article 37, according to which every child deprived of liberty shall be treated in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[6] in particular the obligation to treat men and women equally in all stages of procedures in courts and tribunals,

Calling attention to the numerous international standards in the field of the administration of justice,

Emphasizing that the right to access to justice as contained in applicable international human rights instruments forms an important basis for strengthening the rule of law through the administration of justice,

---

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex, and resolution 44/128, annex.

[3] Resolution 39/46, annex.

[4] Resolution 2106 A (XX), annex.

[5] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[6] Resolution 34/180, annex.

Mindful of the importance of ensuring respect for the rule of law and human rights in the administration of justice, in particular in post-conflict situations, as a crucial contribution to building peace and justice and ending impunity,

Recalling the Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System[7] and the establishment and subsequent meetings of the coordination panel on technical advice and assistance in juvenile justice,

Calling attention to the relevant provisions of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century,[8] and of the plans of action for its implementation and follow-up,[9]

Recalling its resolution 54/163 of 17 December 1999, as well as Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/39 of 20 April 2000[10] and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/28 of 28 July 1999,

1. *Reaffirms* the importance of the full and effective implementation of all United Nations standards on human rights in the administration of justice;

2. *Reiterates its call* to all Member States to spare no effort in providing for effective legislative and other mechanisms and procedures, as well as adequate resources, to ensure the full implementation of those standards;

3. *Invites* Governments to provide training, including gender-sensitive training, in human rights in the administration of justice, including juvenile justice, to all judges, lawyers, prosecutors, social workers, immigration and police officers, and other professionals concerned, including personnel deployed in international field presences;

4. *Invites* States to make use of technical assistance offered by the relevant United Nations programmes in order to strengthen national capacities and infrastructures in the field of the administration of justice;

5. *Appeals* to Governments to include in their national development plans the administration of justice as an integral part of the development process and to allocate adequate resources for the provision of legal-aid services with a view to promoting and protecting human rights, and invites the international community to respond favourably to requests for financial and technical assistance for the enhancement and strengthening of the administration of justice;

6. *Encourages* the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and United Nations institutes in the areas of human rights and crime prevention and criminal justice, and other relevant parts of the United Nations system, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including national professional associations concerned with promoting United Nations standards in this field, and other segments of civil society, including the media, to continue to develop their activities in promoting human rights in the administration of justice;

7. *Invites* the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for International Crime Prevention

---

[7] Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/30, annex.

[8] Resolution 55/59, annex.

[9] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 10* (E/2001/30/Rev.1), part two, chap. I.

[10] Ibid., *2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention of the Secretariat, to coordinate closely their activities relating to the administration of justice;

8. *Calls upon* mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and its subsidiary bodies, including special rapporteurs, special representatives and working groups, to continue to give special attention to questions relating to the effective promotion and protection of human rights in the administration of justice, including juvenile justice, and to provide, where appropriate, specific recommendations in this regard, including proposals for advisory services and technical assistance measures;

9. *Calls upon* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to reinforce, within her mandate, her activities relating to national capacity-building in the field of the administration of justice, in particular in post-conflict situations;

10. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue organizing training courses and other relevant activities aimed at enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights in the field of the administration of justice, and commends the Office for its work on the development of a human rights manual for judges, prosecutors and lawyers within the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004;

11. *Welcomes* the increased attention paid to the issue of juvenile justice by the High Commissioner, in particular through technical assistance activities, and, taking into account that international cooperation to promote juvenile justice reform has become a priority within the United Nations system, encourages further activities, within her mandate, in this regard;

12. *Calls upon* the coordination panel on technical advice and assistance in juvenile justice further to increase cooperation among the partners involved, to share information and to pool their capacities and interests in order to increase the effectiveness of programme implementation;

13. *Underlines* the importance of rebuilding and strengthening structures for the administration of justice and respect for the rule of law and human rights in post-conflict situations, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure system-wide coordination and coherence of programmes and activities of the relevant parts of the United Nations system in the field of the administration of justice in post-conflict situations, including assistance provided through United Nations field presences;

14. *Stresses* the special need for national capacity-building in the field of the administration of justice, in particular through reform of the judiciary, the police and the penal system, as well as juvenile justice reform, in order to establish and maintain stable societies and the rule of law in post-conflict situations, and in this context welcomes the role of the Office of the High Commissioner in supporting the establishment and functioning of transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict situations;

15. *Decides* to consider the question of human rights in the administration of justice at its fifty-eighth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001